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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/690,243	10/17/2000	Ari Engelberg	36530/RRT/S850	2962

23363 7590 03/13/2003

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EXAMINER

BACKER, FIRMIN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3621

DATE MAILED: 03/13/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application N .

09/690,243

Examin r

Firmin Backer

Applicant(s)

ENGELBERG ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 October 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-79 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-79 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 October 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This is in response to a letter for patent filed on October 17th, 2000 in which claims 1-79 are presented for examination. Claims 1-79 are pending in the letter.

Claim Objections

1. Claims 8 and 15 are objected to because of the following informalities: applicants disclose "*the multiple cryptographic module*". Applicants are advised to delete the "*the*" in order to overcome examiner's objection.
2. Claims 17 and 58 are objected to because of the following informalities: applicants disclose "*the proper operation*". Applicants are advised to delete the "*the*" in order to overcome examiner's objection.
3. Claim 23 is objected to because of the following informalities: applicants disclose "*the postal indicium*". Applicants are advised to delete the "*the*" in order to overcome examiner's objection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1-79 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Whitehouse (U.S. Patent No. 6,005,945 (*applicant submitted IDS*)).

6. As per claim 1, Whitehouse teaches a scalable on-line system for printing value bearing items (VBI) (*electronic distribution of postage, 100*) comprising a client system (*host system, fig 3*) for interfacing with one or more users (*customer, 104*) and a scalable server system (*postal service, 180*) capable of communicating with the client system over a communication network (*network, fig 3*) (*see figs 3, 4, column 7 line 54-8 line 11*) comprising a database (*secure central computer 102, memory 154*) remote from the users including information about the users (*see fig 4, column 8 lines 23-29, 54-58, 9 line 15-19*), a stateless cryptographic module (*keys*) for authenticating the one or more users (*see column 6 line 46-65*) and a plurality of security device transaction data (*transaction log*) stored in the database for ensuring authenticity of the one or more users, wherein each security device transaction data can be processed in the server system in a stateless manner (*see figs 3, 4, column 8 line 59-65, 9 line 12-50*).

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7. As per claim 2, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein each security device transaction data is related to a user (*see column 9 lines 12-20*).

8. As per claim 3, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the security device transaction data related to a user is loaded into the cryptographic module when the user requests to operate on a value bearing item (*see column 9 lines 45-50*).

9. As per claim 4, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the security device transaction data related to a user is updated and returned to the database (*see column 9 line 51-63, 12 line 53-56*).

10. As per claim 5, Whitehouse teaches a system further comprising one module is capable of processing any of the plurality of security device transaction data (*see column 9 line 51-63*).

11. As per claim 6, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein a user can be authenticated using any of the cryptographic modules (*see column 9 line 51-63*).

12. As per claim 7, Whitehouse teaches a system further comprising computer executable code for load-balancing to route user requests to the at least one more cryptographic module (*see column 19 line 35-20 line 8*).

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13. As per claim 8, Whitehouse teaches a system further comprising computer executable code for load-balancing to distribute traffic among the multiple cryptographic modules (*see column 19 line 35-20 line 8*).

14. As per claim 9, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the cryptographic module is capable of authenticating any of the one or more users (*see column 19 line 35-20 line 8*).

15. As per claim 10, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the database is partitioned across a plurality of physical databases (*see fig 7*).

16. As per claim 11, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the cryptographic module performs cryptographic function on a transaction related to the database (*see fig 7*).

17. As per claim 12, Whitehouse teaches a system further comprising computer executable code for password authentication to prevent unauthorized access to the database (*see column 10 line 45-60*).

18. As per claim 13, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the database stores a first set of one or more last database transactions and the cryptographic module stores a second set of one or more last database transactions for comparison with the first set of one or more last database transactions stored in the database to verify each database transaction (*see column 8 line 63-9 line 12*).

19. As per claim 14, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the cryptographic module prevents further database transactions if the second set of one or more last transaction stored in the cryptographic module does not compare with the first set of one or more last transaction stored in the database (*see column 9 lines 1-12*).

20. As per claim 15, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the cryptographic module includes a data validation subsystem for allowing the module to verify that data is up to date and an auto-recovery subsystem for automatically re-synchronize the module with the data (*see column 9 line 32-50*).

21. As per claim 16, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the cryptographic module includes a computer executable code for preventing unauthorized modification of data (*see column 15 line 1-17*).

22. As per claim 17, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the cryptographic module includes a computer executable code for ensuring the proper operation of cryptographic security and VBI related meter functions (*see column 16 line 45-67*).

23. As per claim 18, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the cryptographic module includes a computer executable code for supporting multiple concurrent users (*see fig 7*).

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24. As per claim 19, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the database includes one or more indicium data elements, data for account maintenance, and data for revenue protection (*see fig 4*).

25. As per claim 20 and 21, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the database includes virtual meter information and a descending register data (*see column 10 line 50-11 line 26, 14 lines 25-36*).

26. As per claims 22 and 23, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the value bearing item is a mail piece that comprises a digital signature (*see column 7 lines 1-5, 8 line 47-51 and 11 lines 27-29*).

27. As per claim 24, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the cryptographic module performs cryptographic function on validation information according to a user request for printing a VBI (*see column 9 lines 12-30*).

28. As per claim 25, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the cryptographic module generates data sufficient to print a postal indicium in compliance with postal service regulation on a mail piece (*see column 8 line 65-9 line 11*).

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29. As per claims 26-31, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein a bar code is printed on the value bearing item that is a ticket, is a coupon, is currency, a voucher, a traveler's check (*see column 8 lines 14-18, 13 lines 56-60*).

30. As per claim 32, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein each security device transaction data includes one or more of an ascending register value, a descending register value, a respective cryptographic module ID, an indicium key certificate serial number, a licensing ZIP code, a key token for an indicium signing key, user secrets, a key for encrypting user secrets, date and time of last transaction, last challenge received from a respective client subsystem, an operational state of the respective module, expiration dates for keys, and a passphrase repetition list (*see column 9 lines 12-67, 13 lines 20-36, 14 lines 25-55*).

31. As per claim 33, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein each security device transaction data includes one or more of a private key, a public key, and a public key certificate, wherein the private key is used to sign module status responses and a VBI which, in conjunction with a public key certificate, demonstrates that the module and the VBI are authentic (*see column 9 lines 12-50, 13 lines 20-36*).

32. As per claim 34, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the cryptographic module is capable of performing one or more of Rivest, Shamir and Adleman (RSA) public key encryption, DES, Triple-DES, DSA signature, SHA-1, and Pseudo-random number generation algorithms (*see column 23 lines 49-59*).

33. As per claim 35, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the server system further comprises one or more of a postal server subsystem, a provider server subsystem, an e-commerce subsystem, a staging subsystem, a client support subsystem, a decision support subsystem, a SMTP subsystem, an address matching service subsystem, a SSL proxy server subsystem, and a web server subsystem (*see figs 3 and 4*).

34. As per claim 36, Whitehouse teaches a system wherein the database includes one or more of a postal database, a provider database, an e-commerce database, and a membership database (*see fig 3, 4*).

35. As per claim 37, Whitehouse teaches a system further comprising an address matching server for verifying a correct address specified by a user (*see column 12 line 65-13 line 15*).

36. As per claim 38, Whitehouse teaches a system further comprising a printer driver database for storing supported printer driver information (*see figs 3 and 4*).

37. As per claim 39, Whitehouse teaches a method for printing value-bearing items (VBI) (*electronic distribution of postage, 100*) via a communication network (*network, fig 3*) including a client system (*host system, fig 3*), and a scalable server system (*postal service, 180*) (*see figs 3, 4, column 7 line 54-8 line 11*), the method comprising interfacing (*communicating*) with one or more users (*customer, 104*) via the client system (*host system, fig 3*) communicating with the

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client system over the communication network(*see figs 3, 4, column 7 line 54-8 line 11*), storing (*storing*) user information (*user information*) in a database (*secure central computer 102, memory 154*) accessible through the network (*see fig 4, column 8 lines 23-29, 54-58*), authenticating (*verifying*) the one or more users using a scalable cryptographic module (*see column 6 line 46-65*), and storing in the database a plurality of security device transaction data for ensuring authenticity of the one or more users, wherein each security device transaction data can be processed in the server system in a stateless manner (*see figs 3, 4, column 8 line 59-65, 9 line 12-50*).

38. As per claim 40, Whitehouse teaches a method wherein each security device transaction data is related to a user (*see column 9 lines 12-20*).

39. As per claim 41, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising of loading the security device transaction data related to a user into the cryptographic module when the user requests to operate value bearing item (*see column 9 lines 45-50*).

40. As per claim 42, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising of updating and returning the security device transaction data related to a user to the database (*see column 9 line 51-63, 12 line 53-56*).

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41. As per claim 43, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising adding at least one more stateless cryptographic module, wherein each cryptographic module is capable of processing any of the plurality of security device transaction data (*see column 9 line 51-63*).

42. As per claim 44, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising of authenticating a user using any of the cryptographic modules (*see column 9 line 51-63*).

43. As per claim 45, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising load-balancing to route user requests to the at least one more cryptographic module *see column 19 line 35-20 line 8*).

44. As per claim 46, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising load-balancing to distribute traffic among the multiple cryptographic modules *see column 19 line 35-20 line 8*).

45. As per claim 47, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising authenticating any of the one or more users using the cryptographic module (*see column 9 line 51-63*).

46. As per claim 48, Whitehouse teaches a method comprising partitioning the database across a plurality of physical databases (*see fig 7*).

47. As per claim 49, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising encrypting database transactions using the cryptographic module (*see column 10 line 45-60*).

48. As per claim 50, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising verifying a user password before granting access to the database (*see column 15 line 1-17*).

49. As per claim 51, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising storing one or more last database transactions in the database storing one or more last database transactions in the cryptographic module; and comparing the one or more last database transactions stored in the database with the one or more last database transactions stored in the cryptographic module to verify each database transaction (*see column 16 line 45-67*).

50. As per claim 52, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising encrypting transactions related to the database using the cryptographic module (*see column 15 line 1-17*).

51. As per claim 53, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising storing one or more last database transactions in the database, storing one or more last database transactions in the cryptographic module for comparison with the one or more last database transactions stored in the database to verify each database transaction (*see column 10 line 45-60*).

52. As per claim 54, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising preventing further database transactions if the one or more last transaction stored in the cryptographic module does not compare with the one or more last transaction stored in the database (*see column 8 line 63-9 line 12*).

53. As per claim 55, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising preventing unauthorized modification of data using the cryptographic module (*see column 16 line 45-67*).

54. As per claim 56, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising verifying that the database is up to date (*see column 10 line 45-60*).

55. As per claim 57, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising automatically re-synchronizing the cryptographic module with the database (*see column 9 line 51-63*).

56. As per claim 58, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising ensuring the proper operation of cryptographic security and VBI related meter functions (*see column 9 lines 12-20*).

57. As per claim 59, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising supporting multiple concurrent operators (*see fig 7*).

58. As per claim 60, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising storing information about a number of last transactions in a respective internal register of each of the one or more cryptographic devices, storing a table including the information about a last transaction in the database, comparing the information saved in the respective device with the respective information saved in the database; and loading a new transaction data if the respective

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information stored in the device compares with the respective information stored in the database
(*see column 10 line 45-11 line 25*).

59. As per claim 61, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising the step of storing data for creating one or more indicium, account maintenance, and revenue protection (*see column 10 line 45-11 line 25*).

60. As per claims 62-65, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising printing a mail piece includes a digital signature, a postage amount, an ascending register of used postage and descending register of available postage (*see column 13 lines 20-40, 14 line 25-36, 16 lines 19-38*).

61. As per claims 66-71, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising printing a ticket, a bar code, a coupon, currency, a voucher, a traveler's check (*see column 7 line 46-53, 8 line 14-18, 13 lines 56-60*).

62. As per claim 72, Whitehouse teaches a method wherein the security device transaction data includes an ascending register value, a descending register value, a respective cryptographic device ID, an indicium key certificate serial number, a licensing ZIP code, a key token for an indicium signing key, user secrets, a key for encrypting user secrets, date and time of last transaction, last challenge received from a respective client subsystem, an operational state of the

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respective device, expiration dates for keys, and a passphrase repetition list (*see column 13 lines 20-40, 14 line 25-36, 16 lines 19-38*).

63. As per claim 73, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising performing one or more of Rivest, Shamir and Adleman (RSA) public key encryption, DES, Triple-DES, DSA signature, SHA-1, and Pseudo-random number generation algorithms using each of the cryptographic devices (*see 23 lines 49-59*).

64. As per claim 74, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising keeping track of user accesses to a vendor website using a website database (*see fig 7*).

65. As per claim 75, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising storing postal transaction data, financial transaction data, customer marketing information, commerce product information, meter license information, meter resets, meter history, and meter movement information in an offline database (*see column 10 line 45- 11 line 29*).

66. As per claim 76, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising storing customer information, financial transactions, and information for marketing queries in a data warehouse database (*see column 9 lines 12-31*).

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67. As per claim 77, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising authorizing and capturing funds from a customer's account and transferring the funds to a vendor's account using an e-commerce server (*see column 11 line 60-67*).

68. As per claim 78, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising verifying a correct address specified using a user using an address matching server (*see column 9 line 51-63, 12 line 53-56*).

69. As per claim 79, Whitehouse teaches a method further comprising storing supported printer driver information in a printer driver database (*see figs 3 and 4*).

Conclusion

70. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

a. *Cordey et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,466,921) teach a virtual postage metering system provides central management of all postage without the need to manage physical meters or PSDs*

b. *Amanda (U.S. Patent No 6,385,731)) teaches on-line electronic postage metering system that operates in conjunction with the United States Postal Service (USPS) that allows a user to print a postal indicium at home, at office, or any other desired place in a secure and fraud-free manner. A user computer and a user printer, electronically*

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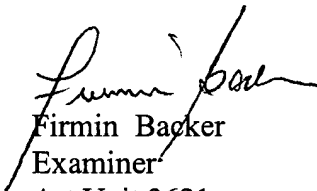
connected to the PSD server and the USPS computer, constitute an on-line electronic postage meter.

c. *Kara et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,249,777) teach a demand program that may be coupled to a word processing program, or other process, residing within the first PC, thus allowing the user to request and subsequently print the postage indicia on correspondence or postal items generated by the coupled process.*

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Firmin Backer whose telephone number is (703) 305-0624. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thu 8:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Trammell can be reached on (703) 305-9768. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-7687 for regular communications and (703) 305-7687 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.


Firmin Backer
Examiner
Art Unit 3621

February 26, 2003